

FREEDOM OF BELIEF, EXPRESSION, AND ASSOCIATION IN THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 404, S. Res. 217.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 217) relating to the freedom of belief, expression, and association in the People's Republic of China.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution which had been reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations with amendments to the preamble, as follows:

(The parts of the preamble intended to be stricken are shown in boldface brackets, and the parts of the preamble intended to be inserted are shown in italic.)

S. RES. 217

Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirm the freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and assembly as fundamental human rights belonging to all people;

Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, including the People's Republic of China, a member of the United Nations;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights but has yet to ratify the treaty and thereby make it legally binding;

Whereas the Constitution of the People's Republic of China provides for the freedom of religious belief and the freedom not to believe;

Whereas according to the Department of State and international human rights organizations, the Government of the People's Republic of China does not provide these freedoms but continues to restrict unregistered religious activities and persecutes persons on the basis of their religious practice through measures including harassment, prolonged detention, physical abuse, incarceration, and police closure of places of worship; and

Whereas under the International Religious Freedom Act, the Secretary of State has designated the People's Republic of China as a country of special concern;

[Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has issued a decree declaring a wide range of activities illegal and subject to prosecution, including distribution of Falun Gong materials, gatherings or silent sit-ins, marches or demonstrations, and other activities to promote Falun Gong and has begun the trials of several Falun Gong practitioners;

[Whereas the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China on October 30, 1999, adopted a new law banning and criminalizing groups labeled by the Government of the People's Republic of China as cults; and

[Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has officially labeled the Falun Gong meditation group a cult and has formally charged at least four members of the Falun Gong under this new law:] Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China to—

(1) release all prisoners of conscience and put an immediate end to the harassment, detention, physical abuse, and imprisonment of Chinese citizens exercising their legitimate rights to free belief, expression, and association; and

(2) demonstrate its willingness to abide by internationally accepted norms of freedom of belief, expression, and association by repealing or amending laws and decrees that restrict those freedoms and proceeding promptly to ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise in support of S. Res. 217, which calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to release all prisoners of conscience, to end its persecution of people of faith, and to abide by internationally accepted human rights standards. This resolution is cosponsored by Senators LOTT, NICKLES, MACK, COVERDELL, COLLINS, FEINGOLD, DURBIN, LEAHY, SNOWE, GORTON, and WELLSTONE.

Mr. President, the crackdown in China is escalating. The most immediate target is Falun Gong—a movement which combines traditional breathing exercises with elements of Buddhism, Taoism and the beliefs of its founder. Since April, when more than 10,000 practitioners of Falun Gong shocked the Chinese government by gathering in front of the leadership compound in Beijing, the Chinese government has tried to systematically eradicate the practice.

The Beijing regime rounded up thousands of practitioners, arrested its leaders, ransacked homes, confiscated and burned Falun Gong materials, and forced adherents to renounce their beliefs. The government then banned the practice of Falun Gong in July and officially labeled it a cult as part of a nationwide propaganda campaign to discredit practitioners. But this was not enough. On October 30, 1999, in a perverse maneuver, the National People's Congress raised the stakes of persecution by adopting a new law banning and criminalizing groups deemed by the Chinese government to be cults—perverse because this is the Chinese government's way of legitimizing their abuses of human rights—perverse because the law is being applied retroactively.

Protestors of this law faced police who beat, kicked, and yanked the hair of several elderly women protestors. Practitioners, mostly middle-aged or senior citizens, sitting or standing in silent meditation were dragged away from Tiananmen square. But they remained peaceful.

The Chinese government has wasted no time in arresting Falun Gong leaders and charging them under this law. As of November 9, 1999, according to Chinese officials, 111 people had been formally arrested on charges ranging from disrupting state security to stealing state secrets. Many more have been detained and sent to re-education programs or labor camps. Now, at least four leaders have been convicted, with

sentences ranging from two to twelve years. Many more will be convicted.

The truth of the matter is that the Chinese government is insecure and cannot tolerate any group that is outside of its control. That is why it is engaged in this crackdown. That is why it sentenced four pro-democracy activists to jail terms ranging from four to 11 years. That is why it continues to persecute people of faith.

In August, police detained a 65-year-old bishop of China's underground Roman Catholic Church in Hebei province and convicted seven lay members of the underground Catholic church in Jiangxi province.

In October, in Guangzhou, some 200 police officers demolished a shelter used by House Church Christians. They detained, brutalized, and warned five House Church Christians against preaching or practicing their faith. I am extremely concerned about the well being of Christians who are suffering in detention for their faith, including Pastor Li Dexian, one of the Guangzhou House Church members, Zhang Ronglian from Henan, and Zheng Xinqi from Anhui.

These incidents re simply anecdotal. They reflect a greater pattern of ongoing religious persecution.

Mr. President, at the same time that the Chinese government is cracking down on its own citizens, at the same time it is authorizing harsher punishments for believing outside of government control, the Beijing regime is flouting international norms, and even tossing aside its own constitution, which supposedly provides for the freedom of religious belief and the freedom not to believe.

The freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and assembly are not "western values" or "American values" that we are trying to impose on China. These values have been embraced by the international community. And it is up to the international community to uphold them when they are being trampled—to speak out in the face of injustice.

This resolution is part of our responsibility. With this resolution, we urge the Chinese government to step back into the realm of international standards, to end its crackdown, and to release its prisoners of conscience. We urge the Chinese government to end its "campaign for stability," which has only caused far greater instability.

Mr. President, I expect that this resolution will be adopted. I also expect that the Clinton Administration will not offer silence as a hidden concession for the WTO agreement signed with China but will instead use this statement by the Senate to strengthen its hand in advocating an end to persecution in China.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the amendments to the preamble be agreed to, the preamble, as amended, be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table,

and any statements relating to this resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 217) was agreed to.

The amendments to the preamble were agreed to.

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

[The resolution was not available for printing. It will appear in a future edition of the RECORD.]

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I note that I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution which was introduced by our colleague, Senator HUTCHINSON of Arkansas, who has been a real leader on this issue.

RECOGNIZING 75 YEARS OF SERVICE OF UNITED STATES BORDER PATROL

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 122, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 122) recognizing the United States Border Patrol's 75 years of service since its founding.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 122) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

CELEBRATING ONE AMERICA

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 390, H. Con. Res. 141.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 141) celebrating One America.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 141) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I commend Representative CHARLES RANGEL for authorizing the "One America" resolution, H. Con. Res. 141, which we just passed.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 371, H.J. Res. 65.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will report the joint resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 65) commending the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the joint resolution.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 65, which commends the World War II veterans who fought bravely in the Battle of the Bulge. This resolution was passed unanimously by the House on October 5, 1999 and mirrors S.J. Res. 32, which I introduced earlier this year.

Mr. President, in mid-1994, the Allies were hopeful. The Russian Red Army was closing in on the German army on the Eastern front and German cities were being devastated by American bombing. The Allies had taken Paris, Casablanca, Tripoli, Naples, and Rome, and they were looking toward an end to the war in Europe. Hitler was on the run.

In desperation, Hitler planned a surprise counterattack on the Allies on an 80 mile front running from southern Belgium to the middle of Luxembourg. Hitler hoped to break through this thinly held line in the Ardennes forest region, cripple Allied fuel supply lines, and inflame tensions within the alliance.

On the harsh winter morning of December 16, 1944, five months after the Allied landings at Normandy, France, eight German armored divisions and thirteen German infantry divisions launched a brutal onslaught against five divisions of the United States first Army. A screaming hail of artillery fire sent many men to their deaths. Roger Rutland, First Sergeant in the 106th Infantry, described the devastation. "We lost many men that first day. An infantry company was approximately 200 men. A Company was 21 men after the first day. C Company could account for 59 men, and in my company, I lost only 28 men the first day. Every company commander was missing the first day except my company's commander . . . some of my better men in garrison were some of the first to crack under combat conditions.

They were like hugging each other and just shivering . . . They never had seen such a thing before." The American forces were pushed back. Many ran out of ammunition. After three days of fighting, more than 4,000 of the 106th were forced to surrender. But the American forces regrouped and pressed on.

For forty-one days, American forces fought against two enemies, German forces and the worst European winter in memory. Freezing conditions made it difficult to see more than ten or twenty yards ahead, much less fight out of frozen foxholes. Halfway through the battle, American troops were still waiting for the main shipment of winter boots. Men became cut off from their division. They lost the feeling in their feet as their toes froze. Some had to have their feet amputated at the ankles. Fifteen thousand soldiers were taken off the line because they suffered from frostbite. Some wounded soldiers froze to death. But the American forces did not give in. They pushed on. They were met with brutality.

On December 17th, 140 Americans were taken prisoner at Baugnez. While on the road headed for Malmedy, 86 of these unarmed American soldiers were shot by their German captors in cold blood in what is now known as the Malmedy Massacre.

In spite of this horror, American soldiers fought on and took the key Belgian town of Bastogne. One of the heroes at Bastogne was James Hendrix, a Private in the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalion, 4th Armored Division and a native of Lepanto, Arkansas. On the night of December 26th, Private Hendrix was part of the leading element in the final thrust to break through to Bastogne. He and his fellow soldiers were met with fierce artillery and small arms fire. But he did not back down. Instead, he advanced against two 88mm guns and overpowered them. He saved two of his fellow soldiers who were wounded, helpless, and at the mercy of intense machine gun fire. He fought on and in another selfless act, Private Hendrix ran through sniper fire and exploding mines to pull a soldier out of a burning half-track. Because of his courage and valor, because of men who fought like him, because of the heroic efforts of the 101st Airborne, American forces fought successfully at Bastogne. Private Hendrix was later awarded a Medal of Honor for his selfless heroism.

When the skies cleared at the end of December, Allied air forces were able to assist the ground forces. By early January 1945, Allied forces began pushing Hitler's troops back. At the end of January, American troops made their way back to the lines they had held when the battle began. Three months later, Allied forces put an end to Nazi Germany.

Six hundred thousand American troops, 55,000 British soldiers, and other Allied participated in the Battle of the Bulge. With catastrophic casualties, the Army constantly had to find